What is claimed is:

1. A method of operating a retail system which includes (i) a plurality of self-service checkout terminals, (ii) a first remote supervisor terminal, and (iii) a second remote supervisor terminal, comprising the

5   steps of:

operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during a first period of time;

maintaining said second remote supervisor terminal in an idle

10   mode of operation such that said second remote supervisor terminal does not monitor operation of any of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time;

operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of a first group of said

15   plurality of self-service checkout terminals during a second period of time; and

operating said second remote supervisor terminal such that said second remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of a second group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said second

20   period of time,

wherein said first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals is different from said second group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals so as to assist a plurality of customers respectively operating each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein:

said step of operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of said first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals includes the step

5 of operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of said first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals so as to assist a first group of customers respectively operating each of said first group of self-service checkout terminals, and

10 said step of operating said second remote supervisor terminal such that said second remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of said second group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said second remote supervisor terminal such that said second remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of said second

15 group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals so as to assist a second group of customers respectively operating each of said second group of self-service checkout terminals.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said first remote supervisor

5 terminal so as to provide security to each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein:

said step of operating said first remote supervisor terminal such

10 that said first remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of said first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said first remote supervisor terminal so as to provide security to said first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time, and

15 said step of operating said second remote supervisor terminal such that said second remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of said second group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said second remote supervisor terminal so as to provide security to said second group of said plurality of self-service

20 checkout terminals during said second period of time.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said retail system further includes a third remote supervisor terminal, further comprising the steps of:

operating said first remote supervisor terminal such that said first

5   remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of a third group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during a third period of time;

operating said second remote supervisor terminal such that said second remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of a fourth group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said third period of

10   time; and

operating a third remote supervisor terminal such that said third remote supervisor terminal monitors operation of a fifth group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said third period of time,

wherein each of said first group of self-service checkout terminals,

15   said second group of self-service checkout terminals, said third group of self-service checkout terminals, said fourth group of self-service checkout terminals, and said fifth group of self-service checkout terminals is different from one another.

7. A method of operating a retail system, comprising the steps of:

operating a first remote supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of a first group of self-service checkout terminals during a first period of time;

5   operating a second remote supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of a second group of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time;

operating said first remote supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said second group of self-service checkout terminals during a 10   second period of time; and

operating said second remote supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said first group of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time,

wherein said first group of self-service checkout terminals is 15   different from said second group of self-service checkout terminals.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein:

said step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said first group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to assist a first group of customers respectively operating said first group of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time, and

said step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said second group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to assist a second group of customers respectively operating said second group of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein:

said step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said second group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to assist a third group of customers respectively operating said second group of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time, and

said step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said first group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to assist a fourth group of customers respectively operating said first group of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time.

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10. The method of claim 7, wherein:

said step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said first group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to provide security to

5   said first group of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time, and

said step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of said second group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to

10   provide security to said second group of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein:

said step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to monitor

15   operation of said second group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said first supervisor terminal so as to provide security to said second group of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time, and

said step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to

20   monitor operation of said first group of self-service checkout terminals includes the step of operating said second supervisor terminal so as to provide security to said first group of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time.

12. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of operating a third remote supervisor terminal so as to monitor operation of both said first group of self-service checkout terminals and said second group of self-service checkout terminals during a third period of time.

13. A self-service retail system comprising,

a plurality of self-service checkout terminals for allowing a plurality of customers to checkout items for purchase;

a first remote supervisor terminal electrically coupled to each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals; and

a second remote supervisor terminal electrically coupled to each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals,

wherein (i) said first remote supervisor terminal is configured to monitor operation of each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during a first period of time, (ii) said second remote supervisor terminal is maintained in an idle mode of operation during said first period of time, (iii) said first remote supervisor terminal is further configured to monitor operation of a first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during a second period of time, (iv) said second remote supervisor terminal is further configured to monitor operation a second group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time, and (v) said first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals is different from said second group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals.

14. The self-service retail system of claim 13, wherein said first remote supervisor terminal is further configured to assist each of said plurality of customers during said first period of time.

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15. The self-service retail system of claim 13, wherein:

said first remote supervisor terminal is further configured to assist a first group of said plurality of customers during said second period of time, and

5   said second remote supervisor terminal is further configured to assist a second group of said plurality of customers during said second period of time.

16. The self-service retail system of claim 13, wherein said first

10   remote supervisor terminal is further configured to provide security to each of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said first period of time.

17. The self-service retail system of claim 13, wherein:

15   said first remote supervisor terminal is further configured to provide security to said first group of said plurality of self-service checkout terminals during said second period of time, and

said second remote supervisor terminal is further configured to provide security to said second group of said plurality of self-service

20   checkout terminals during said second period of time.